

You're Fired!

Story: You're Fired!

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Summary: Scar decides to ditch the hyenas and work alone. However, when the hyenas plot between themselves to take over the Pride Lands, Scar finds they are far more resourceful than he first thought...

***Chapter 1*: Chapter 1: Another Murderous Task**

AN: Ready to dive right into another story of mine? Of course you are!

You're Fired!

Chapter One: Another Murderous Task

"This isn't looking good," Simba observed worriedly as those two villainous hyenas, Shenzi and Banzai, got ready to throw him and Nala from the top of a very tall cliff.

Apparently Scar was in the mood for hunting down the two cubs today, and sent his 'best' hyenas to capture them and kill them by throwing the two cubs off of the tallest cliff they could find. Unfortunately for Simba and Nala, they had succeeded.

"Really?" Nala retorted, frowning. "Maybe that's because they're about to throw us from the tallest cliff in the Pride Lands!"

"Shut up!" Banzai snapped at them. "Jeez, can't you two ever be quiet?"

"No!" they both replied immediately, rebellious to the very end. Simba and Nala weren't an easy pushover, and they certainly weren't going to go down without a fight!

"Why did Scar ask us to drop them from a cliff?" Banzai asked Shenzi, looking rather disappointed at the order Scar had given them. "I wanted to eat them!"

"You want to eat *anything*," said Shenzi as she struggled to drag Nala towards the edge of the cliff, eager to get their act of villainy over with. "Besides, can't you just eat what's left of 'em after we've dropped them?"

"It's too messy," replied Banzai. "I don't like slurping up all the splattered guts and blood from the ground."

Simba and Nala looked at each other and gulped nervously. Splattered guts and blood all over the ground? That didn't sound good! That didn't sound good at all!

"You didn't seem to mind when you were slurping up those slimy worms back when we were in the jungle," Shenzi pointed out.

"They were... err... smaller," Banzai told her, smiling innocently. "And weren't as... you know, slimy."

"Whatever," Shenzi said as she rolled her eyes, not particularly bothered about arguing with her fellow hyena. "Let's just get rid of them before somebody sees us."

Shenzi and Banzai attempted to tighten their grips on the two cubs as they tried to murder them by throwing them off the edge of the cliff. However, Simba and Nala fought bravely to make sure that didn't happen. They needed to keep fighting if they stood a chance of living through this.

"You'll be sorry if you don't let us go!" Simba declared bravely as he resisted against his villainous captors, desperate to escape from their clutches before they managed to kill him, not to mention his best friend also.

Shenzi laughed at the cub's bravery, thinking it was a very foolish thing to do, especially when dealing with evil creatures such as themselves. She was very confident in herself this time, knowing there were no distractions but the cubs themselves. It was one of the easiest jobs she'd had to do, and one she had a feeling that she might succeed at.

"I suggest you keep your mouth shut," Shenzi warned the foolishly brave cub. "Before I take it off," she sinisterly added, causing a little gasp of shock from Nala.

Simba held his brave face, staying ever defiant to the much larger hyena. "I'm not scared of you," he told her straight to his face.

Shenzi grinned menacingly, letting go of Nala and pushing her face closer to Simba's so they were almost touching. "I can *make* you scared of me."

"Oh, yeah?" challenged Simba. "Just try it. Because the way things are looking, you're the one who's in trouble."

Shenzi's eyes narrowed in confusion. "Say what now?"

"Do it, Nala!" Simba commanded to Nala, who Shenzi had foolishly let go of not a few moments before to try and intimidate Simba.

Nala – who was standing beside Shenzi – pushed her off the edge of the cliff, hoping to make her plummet to her death. That may sound rather harsh, but when push comes to shove, sometimes you have to do things you normally wouldn't.

However, Shenzi didn't fall to her doom. Instead, she found the strength to cling on to the cliff's edge, saving herself just in time.

"Hey!" Banzai exclaimed in surprise as Simba broke away from his grasp and slashed him in the face with his claws, causing him to cry out in pain and put a paw to his face as it bled, blood trickling lightly to the ground. "Ow! Ow, ow, ow, ow, ow!"

"Well, I think it's time for us to get out of here!" Simba exclaimed to Nala after they had successfully turned the tables on the two hyenas.

"Great idea, Simba!" Nala agreed, grinning as the two of them ran away, having narrowly escaped an untimely death.

"Well, don't just stand there!" cried Shenzi, her eyes widened at Banzai, who was still wincing in pain due to the painful wound Simba had left him with. "Help me up!"

"I'm having problems of my own, you know!" Banzai told her as he tenderly caressed the stinging cut on his cheek. "Save yourself!"

"Oh, you're no help!" Shenzi exclaimed as she agonisingly clawed herself to freedom, rolling onto the ground and just barely saving herself from a grisly death.

"I knew you could do it," Banzai told her as he continued to rub the cut on his cheek, occasionally wincing in pain.

Shenzi said nothing in reply. Instead, she got up and slashed Banzai on his other cheek, causing him to cry out at the top of his voice.

"Ow, ow, ow, ow, ow!" he cried as he hopped around, both his cheeks burning and stinging with pain. "What did you do that for?"

"Why do you think?" she replied. "Because instead of helping me you chose to worry about your 'precious' face!"

"This is gonna hurt for days," Banzai moaned as he rubbed both of his cheeks.

"I'm gonna be hurting for days when Scar gets hold of us!" Shenzi exclaimed, knowing that Scar would most likely find a so-called 'suitable punishment' for the two of them, having failed in their task.

The two hyenas' lives had been basically nothing but suffering, day in, day out. It was horrible. Things really didn't look like they could get any worse.

Banzai suddenly had a worried look on his face when Shenzi mentioned Scar. "Oh, no!" he groaned. "Not Scar! I'm hurt enough already without him doing something to us! This is all your fault!"

"My fault? How is it my fault?"

"You shouldn't have let go of that cub. We would've killed them both then!"

"Don't you go blaming me! It's your fault too!"

"At least I could keep a grip on the other cub."

"Oh, yeah, sure! That's why he got away too, isn't it?"

"Well... Uh... Err..." Banzai couldn't find anything to say in response. Shenzi had beaten him again, like she always did. "Aw, forget it. Let's just go back to the jungle and get our butts handed to us... Again."

The two hyenas slowly stumbled away, heading back to the jungle, knowing full well that they weren't going to get a warm welcome when they returned.

Chapter 2: Chapter 2: Yet Another Failure

Chapter Two: Yet Another Failure

"We showed them!" Simba said to Nala as they ran through the Pride Lands, overjoyed that they had escaped the hyenas and a painful death also. "They didn't stand a chance against us!" he told her as they skidded to a halt at the water hole, the usual place they hung out together.

"Well, it did get kinda scary for a few seconds when we were at the edge," Nala admitted. "But let me guess... you didn't get scared because you're the bravest and most heroic cub in the whole world?"

Simba grinned. "I didn't get scared because I'm the bravest and most heroic cub in the whole—" Simba stopped when he realised Nala had predicted what he was going to say correctly. "Yeah. You know what I mean." He tapped her. "You were really brave too, though."

Nala looked surprised. "What, really?"

He nodded. "Yep! We would have died if you didn't push that hyena off the cliff. We're *both* heroes!" he declared, putting his paw around Nala and smiling warmly at her, causing her to feel a funny sensation in her stomach. The familiar sensation that told her she liked Simba as more than just her best friend.

The same sensation struck Simba too, because he also liked Nala more than just a friend. He'd had a crush on her for quite a long time, but was still far too scared to admit it to her, fearing she'd instantly reject him.

Nala wouldn't, of course, because she felt the same way about him. She too was afraid of being rejected, causing the two of them to both hide their feelings from one another. They would probably never ever realise... Unless of course, *one* of them admitted the secret they had been keeping from the other.

"Do you think they'll come back?" Nala asked, fearing that those hyenas would persist in trying to kill them. It wasn't out of the ordinary, because Scar was seemingly relentless in having them and anyone else he despised murdered viciously.

Simba shrugged. "Who cares if they do? We can take 'em. The other day we took on six of them!"

Nala giggled remembering the events of the other day. "Yeah, while Zazu hid behind us shaking."

"It's very rude to make fun of people behind their backs," said a voice from behind them.

Simba and Nala turned around to look at Zazu, who was standing on the ground with an unimpressed look on his face, his wings folded. Clearly he had heard their conversation, particularly their little comment on him.

"Do you automatically have to fly to someone when they start talking about you?" Simba joked, looking down at the little Hornbill. "You do that a lot, you know."

"No, I don't have to automatically fly when someone starts talking about me," Zazu replied. "I just happened to be flying overhead when I heard you two discussing about our little encounter with those disgusting excuses for life the other day."

"Yeah. You were going to just fly away and leave us behind so you could save yourself," Simba reminded him, causing Zazu to narrow his eyes at Simba.

"I thought we agreed not to discuss that anymore," Zazu said as he looked around, as if he was checking that anyone was listening, desperate to keep his precious reputation intact.

"No, I agreed not to tell my Dad and get you fired," Simba corrected him.

"I also agreed not to talk about your little secret, too," Zazu told the cub, causing him to suddenly become very nervous again.

Nala smiled. "What, that he's afraid of being a bad King? He already told me that, in case you're wondering."

Zazu shook his head as a smile formed on his beak. "Oh, no, no, no. Simba has *another* secret that he doesn't want to let you know about."

"Are you going to keep talking about that?" Simba exclaimed, getting tired of Zazu's blackmail. "I might as well just admit that I really love—" Simba gasped and clamped a paw to his mouth before he finished his sentence.

"Really love what?" Nala asked, interested in what Simba's little secret was.

Simba chuckled nervously. "I really love... flowers," he lied. "I like the way they... move in the wind."

Nala stared at him, wide-eyed. She didn't really expect something like that to come out of Simba's mouth. "Uh... Okay," she said, looking back at Zazu. "Guess you don't have to hold any secret against him now, right?"

Zazu laughed. "Oh, I'm sure Simba has a few more secrets lying around the place. Secrets that... might come to light in the upcoming weeks. Until the next secret, Simba," Zazu said before spreading his wings and taking off, leaving the two cubs on their own by the water hole.

Simba collapsed onto his back, sighing deeply. "Why does he never leave us alone?"

Nala lay down beside him, as they both looked up at the sky. "Because that's his job," she replied, causing them both to laugh.

"I suppose it's better than being kidnapped by those hyenas," Simba said optimistically. "I think we scared 'em off. They won't be back for a few days, I'm sure."

"I hope you're right," Nala said as she snuggled up to his side, wanting to get closer to her best friend.

Simba didn't seem to mind.

"So what do we tell him?" Banzai asked Shenzi as they trekked through the jungle, and towards what they assumed would be another punishment from Scar. They were good at predicting these kind of things now, because of how many times they'd failed their esteemed leader.

"The truth, duh!" Shenzi replied.

"Can't we lie?" begged Banzai. He *really* didn't want to experience any more pain. Not today. He'd had enough for one day, being slashed on both his cheeks and all. "Just this once?"

"What, and have him find out the truth a few days later? That'll only make it worse!" Shenzi explained to him.

"Why does this always happen to us?" Banzai moaned. "I think we'd be way better off without Scar, anyway."

Shenzi covered his mouth with her paw, looking around to make sure nobody heard him say that. "You can't say that, you idiot!"

"Why not?" Banzai asked in a muffled voice.

"Scar will *kill* us!"

"I think he's gonna kill us anyway." Banzai decided to continue to talk about why they didn't really need Scar. "I still think we'd be better off without him, though. I mean, what's the guy really done for us?"

"He gives us food," Shenzi answered.

"Not much," Banzai countered. "I've had more food here than I've had from Scar. Those bugs don't taste so bad when you get past all the sliminess."

"He's our only chance of us ever having a real life!" she told him. "We'd be *nothing* without him!"

"What if we *never* get a real life?" he spurted out. "The way things are going, it doesn't look like he's *ever* going to take over the Pride Lands. He's tried hundred of times, and every time it's gone wrong. Like I said – we'd have an easier life without him."

AN: Beginnings of a rebellion? Maybe, maybe not. Come back tomorrow and you'll find out!

***Chapter 3*: Chapter 3: Scar Has Had Enough**

AN: You give me more reviews, so I give you more chapters! I'm on a roll today!

Chapter Three: Scar Has Had Enough

Scar really didn't know why he even bothered sending out the hyenas to do a job for him today. Perhaps it was just for his own pure amusement, or maybe it was because he wanted to give them another chance to prove themselves.

Maybe it was the latter, because over the past few miserable days Scar had slowly begun to realise that the hyenas weren't all they were cracked up to be. They hadn't exactly helped him in any way at all. They were just slaves. Slaves that couldn't accomplish anything that he asked them to do. They were completely useless. What was the point in having them around if they couldn't do anything?

There was no point. It was point/less. Scar would most likely be better off planning things all by himself. It would make his life a lot easier, that was for sure. It'd save him all that time asking the hyenas to go do things, and then waiting until they came back and told him they failed, and then he would shout at them for what seemed like the millionth time. It was the same thing every day, and it was becoming tiresome *very* quickly.

They'd fail again today. Scar knew it. He knew full well they'd come back and give him some pathetic excuse about how it wasn't their fault, when there was no one to blame but themselves for their failure.

Even the simplest of tasks was too hard for them. They couldn't even kill two cubs? What could be simpler than that? If that was an easy task, then he'd love to see them attempt something *really* challenging.

Scar sighed as he saw the two hyenas he sent out, Shenzi and Banzai, approaching him slowly. Both of them had nervous looks on their faces, telling Scar immediately that they were going to launch into a ludicrous excuse about how the fact that they failed was not their own fault, but that of someone else's.

Either that or they were afraid that Scar's head might explode if he heard they had successfully completed their task. For some reason Scar wasn't banking on that option.

"Let me guess – you didn't do it," Scar concluded for the two hyenas, too bored to even get angry with them right now.

"We *almost* did it," Banzai said with an awkward smile, hoping that would be sufficient enough for Scar. It wasn't. It only succeeded in making Scar angrier.

Scar grabbed the hyena by the throat for the millionth time. "*Almost* isn't good enough!" he roared.

"I had a feeling you'd say that," Banzai choked out.

"They managed to get away, Scar," Shenzi explained. "They're tougher than you think, you know."

Scar closed his eyes and sighed. "They're two cubs, you repulsive moron! How strong can they be? All I asked you to do is pick them up and throw them from a cliff, and now you're telling me that they managed to escape?"

"They tricked us," said Banzai as Scar continued to choke him. "Uh, can you let go of my throat now? I think you're killing me."

Scar tightened his grip on Banzai's throat and looked him in the eyes, grinning menacingly. The grin sent a shiver down Banzai's spine. Just one glare from him could make Scar look terrifying. "Believe me, if I wanted you dead then I would have killed you by now," he informed the hyena.

Banzai managed a tight, awkward smile. "Understood."

"Good," said Scar, dropping him to the ground. He got up from the ground, causing the two hyenas to instinctively jump back, afraid that Scar might suddenly lash out at them viciously.

"Scar w-what are you d-doing?" Shenzi stammered, thinking that Scar was going to attack them any second now.

Scar looked as if he was about to take a step forward, but then hesitated, staying in his original position. A few seconds of uncertain silence followed before Scar scowled and turned around, walking away from Shenzi and Banzai, who were now exchanging confused looks at each other.

"Uh... Scar?" Shenzi called as Scar continued to walk away from them both. "Where are you going?"

"Away from you," he replied simply, in a tone that told them that they were not to follow him. "I have no use for you anymore."

"N-no use?" she repeated, not exactly understanding her leader. "What do you mean, 'no use'?"

"I mean you are no longer under my rule," Scar explained. "You can live out the rest of your pathetic lives in peace. Not that you'll have much left of your lives, what with you having no food and all."

"That's not very fair," said Banzai with a frown on his face.

"Yeah! Scar, you can't just leave us like this!" Shenzi argued.

Scar turned to them, giving them a glare which made him look like he was possessed by some sort of demonic force. "Yes. I. *Can*."

With that chilling declaration, Scar turned around and walked away. He could stand the hyenas and their continuous failures no longer. It was time he moved on. From this day forth, Scar worked alone.

Shenzi frowned, thinking Scar had finally realised just how worthless her and her fellow hyenas were. It had certainly taken him long enough.

Unfortunately for them, this was a very bad thing. Now how were they going to survive? They depended on Scar for everything! *Everything!*

"Great. So now what do we do?" Shenzi asked Banzai as she continued to watch their – former – leader disappear into the distance.

She got no reply from Banzai. After a few seconds she realised this and turned her head to see he was eating some bugs from the ground, cramming them into his mouth and enjoying the taste.

"I don't know about you, but I'm all set for food," he told her, his mouth full of disgusting, slimy insects.

"You can't live off those for the rest of your life!" she informed Banzai.

Banzai grinned as he gulped down some more bugs. "Yeah, of course I can. These things taste great. There's plenty to go around!"

Shenzi rolled her eyes. "We're hyenas, Banzai. We need meat. Thick, juicy meat."

"Well, these bugs are juicy. And some of them are kind of thick," he said, standing up for what was quickly becoming his favourite thing to eat.

Shenzi slapped a paw to her face. "Oh, what are we gonna do?" she moaned as she sunk to the ground, the implications of Scar's exit finally sinking in for her.

"There's plenty of worms to go around," Banzai told Shenzi, earning a cold glare from her. He then shut his mouth, and returned to his food.

***Chapter 4*: Chapter 4: Plans of Their Own**

Chapter Four: Plans of Their Own

"So... where are we going?" Nala asked Simba as they walked side by side through the border of the Pride Lands.

Everything was a lot more barren and rocky around the outskirts, a lot different from the colourfulness and brightness of the rest of the Pride Lands. It signalled the end of the beauty and the beginning of the ugliness. It really came as no surprise to the two cubs why Scar had decided to make his home here. After all, he despised anything that looked even the slightest bit appealing. He preferred things that looked bleak, miserable and depressing. What more could you expect from a sadistic evil mastermind?

Simba grinned at his best friend, a look of mischief in his eyes. "Let's go find somewhere really cool!"

"Now, when you say that, you mean to say somewhere really dangerous, right?" Nala presumed, smiling back at him.

He shrugged in reply. "Cool, danger. It's the same thing to me." He gestured around their surroundings. "It's been empty here since Uncle Scar ran away," he explained. "Who knows what cool stuff he's been hiding?"

"Yeah, but what if he's been hiding evil monsters that want to kill us?" she asked.

"Well, I'd rescue you from them and save the day, of course!" he answered, as if it were a silly question to ask.

"I don't doubt that," Nala said honestly, having every confidence in Simba. If there were monsters out there, then she knew Simba would come to her rescue. He was someone you could trust.

Simba surveyed their surroundings, and a mischievous grin spread across his face when he spotted someone perched on a dead tree branch, apparently talking to himself.

"Hey, look," he said, prodding Nala and pointing to the person perched on the tree branch. "It's Zazu."

Yes, it was Zazu who was talking to himself on the tree branch. Only – as Simba and Nala discovered as they got closer – he wasn't talking to himself.

"... Look Dad, I know what I did back then was wrong but I hope you can find it in your heart to forgive me," said Zazu as he looked up at the sky, a pleading look on his face.

It only took the two cubs a few seconds to realise that Zazu was praying. Praying to his late father, apparently. The cubs became very intrigued, wanting to know just why Zazu was begging forgiveness from his deceased father.

"I know what happened upset you," Zazu continued, "it would have upset me. But it was a long time ago, so why don't we just let bygones be bygones, eh?"

Simba's grin managed to widen. He tapped Nala. "Watch this," he instructed, before looking back at Zazu again.

"I'm not the superstitious type," Zazu carried on. "I don't even know why I'm talking to you now. I know you can't hear me, Dad."

Simba called out to Zazu in a deep voice. "That is what you think, Zazu."

Zazu's eyes widened when he heard the voice, and he looked up at the sky in amazement. His dead father was speaking to him?

"Dad?" Zazu called. "You mean, you can hear me?"

"Loud and clear," Simba confirmed in his deep voice. "Is it forgiveness that you seek, Zazu?"

"Well, yes," Zazu replied. "I'm really very sorry for what has happened, Dad."

"How do I know that you mean it?" Simba asked the Hornbill.

"Oh, I do, Dad," Zazu insisted, nodding. "I do, really. I'd do anything to prove it to you, Dad. Anything you say."

"All right, then. I want you to... smash your head against the tree again and again," Simba instructed, struggling to resist the urge to burst out laughing. This had to be one of the funniest jokes he'd ever played on Zazu!

Nala was having even more of a hard time to stop herself laughing. She held a paw to her face, just about preventing herself from erupting with laughter.

"Smash my head against the tree?" Zazu repeated, finding this an odd request. Especially from someone as 'proper' as his father. "But... that will hurt, won't it?"

"Exactly, you old coot!" Simba exclaimed. "You need to be punished for the terrible crimes you have committed!"

"Terrible crimes? I wouldn't go that far—"

"Do it!" Simba commanded in the deep voice. He couldn't keep this going much longer, because it was just too funny!

Zazu looked uncertainly at the sky, and then at the tree trunk. "Well, if you say so." He then slammed his head into the tree trunk, and staggered backwards in a dazed state, before falling to the ground headfirst, knocked right out.

Simba and Nala looked at each other, and burst out laughing, rolling on the ground as their loud laughs echoed through the Pride Lands.

"That was... the funniest thing... I've ever... seen!" Nala exclaimed through her laughter. She was laughing so hard that her stomach was hurting. It was *that* funny!

"Are you finished yet?" Shenzi asked as she watched Banzai cram bug after bug into his mouth, her patience wearing thin very quickly.

Banzai finished another mouthful. "I think so. I'm stuffed."

There was an awkward moment of silence between the two, and all that could be heard was the sound of crickets chirping.

Banzai cleared his throat and broke the silence. "So... What now?"

"Well, you can continue to eat your bugs while we starve to death!" Shenzi answered enthusiastically. "And then you'll be the last hyena in existence around here!"

Banzai shook his head. "Nah. I got a better plan than that."

Shenzi laughed. "You? A plan? Yeah, right!"

Banzai narrowed his eyes and gave her a disapproving look. "Hey, I'm serious."

Shenzi rolled her eyes. If Banzai had a plan, then it was sure going to be funny! It was miserable times like this when she could do with a good laugh. "Go on, then. Impress me."

"Let's take over the Pride Lands," he told her casually, causing Shenzi to – of course – roll on the floor with laughter.

"Take over the Pride Lands!" she mocked him while she laughed. "*That's* funny! How exactly do you plan on doing that? Scar tried about a hundred times and he couldn't do it! What makes you think *you* can do it?"

"Easy," replied Banzai, staying confident in his plan. "We do it *our* way."

Shenzi gave him a curious look. "How do you mean?" she asked, feeling a little glimmer of interest deep down inside of her. She tried to ignore it, but there was a part of her that wanted to hear what Banzai had in mind. After all, what else did she have to do?

"Well, all those times we tried to take over the kingdom we were doing what Scar told us to do. We only ever work best when we're doing our own thing."

"Go on," Shenzi urged, that little glimmer of interest becoming bigger and bigger as Banzai continued with his explanation.

"Instead of following Scar's plans, we should make plans of our own," Banzai continued. "A simple one. One we can do easily without getting our butts handed to us like before. What do you think?"

An evil grin spread across Shenzi's face, seeing the opportunities that had presented themselves now that Scar was no longer around. They had freedom, and didn't have to follow Scar's constant orders and commands that he shouted out

on a daily basis. They could plot and scheme by themselves, and, maybe, just maybe, if they came up with a plan that could work, they could do what Scar had failed to do several times.

Take over the Pride Lands.

AN: You could play dramatic music over the end of that chapter. Things are getting quite tense, are they not? I know you'll leave me a review, so I don't really need to ask, do I? You're *that* kind.

Chapter 5: Chapter 5: Shenzi Takes Control

AN: You won't more, don't you? Well, I'm not going to stop you. Get reading!

Chapter Five: Shenzi Takes Control

It took Simba and Nala a few minutes for them to finally stop laughing at the joke they had played on Zazu.

Nala sighed as she and Simba lay beside each other, smiling at him. "Did I ever tell you that you're the funniest person I've ever met?"

He smiled back at her, a cocky look on his face. "You might've mentioned it," he replied, before getting to his paws and looking around, searching for anything that might be of interest to him. Come on, there had to be something cool around here! This was where his Uncle Scar had evilly plotted and schemed for years! Surely he had a few secrets hidden around the place?

Simba spotted a rocky hill not too far away from them, and realised that if they got to the top, they'd have a perfect view of the Outlands! They would be able to see *everything*.

Nala joined him by his side, smiling as she followed his gaze, thinking along the same lines as he was. "Let me guess... you're thinking that if we get to the top of that hill then we'll be able to see everything?"

Simba shot her a surprised look. "How did you know that?"

"Simba, I can tell what you're thinking just by looking at you," Nala revealed. "I know you too well."

"Well, what am I thinking about now?" Simba challenged, smiling overconfidently.

Nala studied his expression for a few seconds, a playful look on her face. "Uh... You're thinking about..." She laughed nervously. "Me?"

Simba found it really hard not to gasp in pure shock at Nala's guess. He *was* thinking about her! In fact, he found himself thinking about her quite a lot. Nala was a genius at this kind of thing!

"How did you know that?" Simba asked her, trying to hide the amazement in his voice, just barely managing it. *Barely*.

"I told you, Simba – I'm great at figuring you out," she replied, giving him a teasing look. Nala found herself inclined to ask Simba a question. "Uh... Out of interest, why *exactly* were you thinking about me?"

"No reason," Simba replied suddenly, a little too quickly than he would have preferred to. "It was just to test you, that's all."

In his mind, Simba breathed a little sigh of relief. He found that he was getting better at lying to Nala about how he really felt about her. She seemed none the wiser that Simba had a huge crush on her.

Unbeknownst to Simba, Nala was relieved that *he* was none the wiser that she had a huge crush on him.

Sometimes it felt like the two of them would never confess how they felt about one another. Right now, the two of them seemed pretty content about keeping their secrets to themselves. However, Simba sometimes found himself *wanting* to tell Nala. He feared that he was fighting a losing battle; would he risk his friendship to tell Nala how he felt about her?

Only time would tell.

Shenzi and Banzai found Ed sitting in a secluded area of the jungle, gnawing at a dead tree branch as if it were a tasty portion of zebra leg. For all Shenzi and Banzai knew, Ed probably thought it *was* a portion of zebra leg. His stupidity really knew no boundaries.

Ed's apparent insanity was Scar's fault. He'd accidentally dropped a rock – a *large* rock – on Ed's head from a cliff one day. Scar was aiming for King Mufasa, but he obviously got the cliffs mixed up and tossed the rock off of the wrong one, giving Ed permanent brain damage. He couldn't even speak, his only form of communication being his trademark maniacal laughter.

"Okay, so you're saying that if we can come up with an easy plan then the Pride Lands will be ours?" Shenzi presumed, discussing with Banzai their takeover plans. Plans which Scar would have no involvement in it. The two hyenas had

made up their minds: if Scar wanted nothing to do with them, then they wanted nothing to do with Scar.

Banzai nodded in agreement. "Yeah. Scar always made things too complicated. If we do it then it'll be easy, and we'll have all the food we can eat."

Shenzi grinned, her mind corrupted with greedy thoughts of power and control. "Yeah," she said as she imagined how powerful it would feel to control all of the Pride Lands with no one to stop her. "For once, *we'll* be the ones in charge."

"I bet you'd like to see the look on Scar's face when he sees that we're in charge, huh?" said Banzai as he nudged Shenzi.

Her grin widened. "He'll be so jealous of us!" she exclaimed. "We'll do what he *never* managed to do. And there's *no one* who'll be able to stop us. Not even Scar... I think."

"Now you're getting into it." Banzai walked over to Ed and tapped him on the top of his head, causing him to snap the dead tree branch he was chewing on in two. He dropped the remains of the lifeless branch, panting and laughing softly.

"Hey, Ed, you want to take over the Pride Lands?" Banzai asked the inept hyena, resulting in a few maniacal laughs from him.

Banzai nodded as if he understood him. "I thought you would." He looked up at Shenzi, who now looked ready to take on all of the Pride Lands. Banzai had managed to coax her into his plan, which he was pretty sure would work. He was sick and tired of being ordered around by Scar all the time! It was about time they made plans of their own!

"So, do we let the rest of the guys in on this?" Banzai asked Shenzi, referring to the rest of the hyenas that Scar had ditched along with them.

A cruel grin spread across Shenzi's face as her greedy thoughts consumed her. "Nah," she replied.

Banzai looked surprised by her reply. "Huh? W-why?"

"They haven't helped us out, so why should we help them?" she said, wanting the Pride Lands for herself and her two fellow hyenas only. No one else deserved them. Letting Banzai and Ed in on it was generosity enough. She was the new leader of them, and they would do what she said!

"Well, it was *my* idea," argued Banzai, "so I think we *should* let the rest of the hyenas in on it."

Shenzi glared at him. "Listen, *I'm* in charge around here. You do what *I* say. I'm the one giving the orders around here now! Understand?"

Banzai was quite shocked by her sudden angry outburst. It looked like the power – the power that she didn't actually *have* yet – was getting to her head already. She seemed to be taking Scar's place as their leader. She'd been pushed around too much by that controlling maniac, so she felt it was only right she took control of things from now on.

"Okay," Banzai said, deciding it would be best to do what Shenzi said, or risk things getting nasty. "So, we have a little rest, and then tomorrow we'll—"

"*No!*" Shenzi interrupted him suddenly, causing her voice to echo throughout the jungle and causing birds to scatter from the tree branches in every direction. "We move *now!*"

"*Now?*" Banzai exclaimed. "But I'm tired from trying to kill those two cubs earlier!"

"*Now!*" she repeated, glaring into Banzai's eyes and sending shivers down his spine. She was suddenly becoming very controlling, and Banzai realised that she was enjoying being the boss a *lot*. Anyone else would feel the same after being ordered around like a slave for most of their lives.

Banzai laughed nervously. "Okay. Now."

Chapter 6: Chapter 6: The Constant Element of Fear

Chapter Six: The Constant Element of Fear

"How far up do you think this hill goes, anyway?" Nala asked as she and Simba climbed the rocky hill, which they realised was a lot taller than they first assumed. The Outlands was full of surprises, and it seemed the heights of the various hills and cliffs were one of them. If this was how tall the hills were, then they dreaded to think just how high the cliffs were. Maybe they went right to the top of the world...

Simba shrugged in response. "It can't be too far," he said after a few seconds of deliberation. He then looked back at Nala, that all too familiar glint of mischief in his eyes. "Bet this would be a fun hill to roll down, huh?"

"I guess," replied Nala. "But remember what happened the last time we tried rolling down a hill to get to the jungle? Look where *that* got us."

Simba then remembered the events of the time when the two cubs had decided to sneak off to the jungle without notifying anyone, thinking it would be a pretty cool place to explore. It was beautiful, all right, but the adventure they were hoping to find was not the adventure that they got upon their arrival.

It was in the jungle where they had first encountered a menacing lion known as Hago, who possessed a magical staff armed with a wide array of magic and spells. He froze Nala so Simba would be forced into travelling through a cave to retrieve something known as the Jewel of the Macaw. Whoever possessed it would essentially have control of the entire universe. Luckily, due to Hago's weakness – his crooked back – Simba and Nala were able to escape with their lives.

Hago had come back numerous times to exact his revenge, but each time the two cubs had just about managed to send him packing. They were unable to predict when he may strike next...

They were also unable to predict where he lived. Unbeknownst to them, Hago had moved into the Outlands just after Scar moved *out*. Luckily for Simba and Nala, Hago had took up residence on the opposite side, and not the side they were on. He would have no idea that they were snooping around...

Simba waved away Nala's little reminder of their earlier adventure. "There's no one around here. It's not the jungle, Nala. This is different."

"This is *creepier*," she retorted.

"I thought we liked creepy things. Moto was creepier than this," he said with a smile, causing a little giggle from Nala.

"Yeah," she agreed, nodding. "He was kinda creepy."

"I mean, making a deal to make himself look better?" Simba continued. "Who does that? I thought the whole point of liking someone was to be honest with them."

Nala nodded, only slower this time. "Yeah. If I had a crush on someone then I'd be totally honest with them," she said, a trace of sadness in her voice.

If only he knew, she thought, feeling her heart ache slightly for Simba to know how she felt about him. What would make it better was if he returned the feelings, but that was something that only occurred in her best dreams. It was just that, a silly fantasy...

"Are you sure this'll work?" Shenzi asked Banzai as they made their way through the flatlands, which separated the Pride Lands and the jungle. It was some kind of empty, soulless void between the two locations. The neutral spot.

"Why you asking me?" was Banzai's reply. "I thought *you* were the one so desperate to try this out."

"I'm... just being cautious, that's all," she told him, a little twist of fear in her stomach. Sometimes that little bit of cowardliness every hyena had never seemed to go away. It always lingered in the pit of her stomach like a horrible ache.

However, the hunger for power was stronger than the cowardliness. She wanted the Pride Lands, and nothing more. If she thought about it, then she would come to realise that she was becoming like Scar. She was shouting out orders and insulting her fellow hyenas, just as Scar had. Now Shenzi was the leader.

She didn't mind. It felt good. It made her feel more powerful, more powerful than she had ever felt before. She liked it, and she wanted it to stay that way. *Forever*.

"So you're not going to admit that you're scared, then?" he asked, a sly smile on his face, knowing that she had that little twist of fear deep down inside of her. All hyenas had it. It was in their blood. It was part of them.

"Of course I'm not scared!" she snapped, telling Banzai that she *was* scared. It's was funny how that worked.

"Who do will kill first?" Banzai enquired.

"The two cubs, duh!" Shenzi replied as if it were an obvious thing. "They kept wrecking everything, so this is going to be our revenge. And we're not gonna make it complicated like Scar did. Slashing the two brats in the throat is enough for me."

"Sounds good," said Banzai as he scraped his claws along the flat, old dusty ground. He seemed to eager to get to the killing part of things. For cowards, they sure had an eagerness for murder. The hyenas were very odd creatures indeed.

"Then we go for the King and Queen," Shenzi continued as she explained her plan. "We kill them quickly, too. We *don't* take our time with it. We have to be quick. That's what made Scar a bad leader. He was too slow."

"Says the person who *loved* him a minute ago," Banzai commented, realising just how much Shenzi seemed to have changed over the course of just a few hours. Maybe she had been waiting for something like this for a long time, just faking her obedience and loyalty to Scar. Was this what she wanted all along? To be the true leader?

Banzai didn't know, and part of him didn't actually want to find out. Shenzi was a difficult person to read. She was very unpredictable.

He wondered sometimes why he loved her so much.

AN: Did you get your fix? I'm sure you did. And I'm sure you'll come back tomorrow for the end, right? I sure hope so!

Chapter 7: Chapter 7: The Chase

AN: Another end to another story. They go by so quick.

Chapter Seven: The Chase

"Whoa..." Simba gasped when he finally got to the top of the rocky hill that he and Nala had spent some time climbing.

The view was magnificent, and the cubs' predictions had been absolutely correct. You could see *everything*. The whole of the Outlands could be seen, followed by the entirety of the Pride Lands, then the blandness of the flatlands, and finally the enormity of the jungle. Who knew what lied beyond that? For them, the world went on forever. Anything was possible.

"It's... beautiful," Nala said, totally amazed by the mesmerising sight. Everywhere they had been: you could see it all from here. "You were right. It is *definitely* cool up here."

"I'm *always* right," he told Nala, earning a big laugh from her.

"Simba, if you were always right then you'd be no fun," she informed him, their eyes connecting with each other. "It's... why I like you," she revealed, her eyebrows raised and a kind smile on her face.

She had done it again. She'd managed to give Simba that warm feeling he felt deep inside of him. Not that he minded it all that much. It was a very good feeling...

Simba turned his head toward the bottom of the rocky hill, and his good feelings were quickly assimilated by feelings of pure shock. "Uh... Nala?" he called, continuing to stare down at the bottom of the hill.

"What is it, Simba?" she asked, noticing the sudden shocked look and tone he was using. She followed his gaze, and quickly felt the same way as he did.

"I think they came back for more," Simba jokingly observed as he found himself looking down at Shenzi, Banzai and Ed. Even though they were quite far away, being at the bottom of the hill and all, Simba was still able to notice that there was something quite different about the three hyenas this time.

They looked stronger. More powerful. The menacing looks on their faces told the two cubs that nothing could stop them. Where had this sudden burst of confidence come from? To Simba and Nala, they always seemed very clumsy, apprehensive, *scared*. Something had obviously changed between them.

"W-what are they doing here?" Nala asked, suddenly feeling very shaky and very scared. "I-I thought they would have stayed away after the last time?"

Simba tried to think optimistically, as he too found himself fearing the hyenas more than he usually did. "Look on the bright side. They might not be looking for us."

"Hey, you up there!" called Banzai. "We've been looking for you for a while!"

Simba groaned and winced. Nala narrowed her eyes at him, "'Not looking for us', huh?"

"Okay, so maybe they *are* looking for us. Still, we can take 'em, right?" he asked, trying to brighten up Nala's spirits a little bit more.

"They look scarier," Nala continued, looking down at the three hyenas. She gasped in fright when she realised they were making their way up the rocky hill. "Simba!" she cried, turning frantically to him and pointing at the hyenas. "They're coming up here!" Nala then cowered behind her best friend, shaking with fear. "You'll protect me, right, Simba?"

Simba turned to her. "Of course I will, Nala," he replied warmly, grinning. He felt a little burst of confidence from inside of him. Nala was relying on him, and it was his job to protect her. He promised her that a while ago, and he wasn't going to break that promise. "Besides, they're only a few hyenas. With spooky eyes and sharp teeth, and—"

Simba shrieked when he turned to find himself staring into Shenzi's cruel, menacing eyes. He jumped backwards in fright. Nala closed her eyes as tightly as she could, not wanting to witness her death, which she feared was fast approaching.

"What are you guys doing here?" Simba asked the three of them, chuckling nervously.

"Looking for some cubs to *kill*," Shenzi answered, a threatening grin on her face which showed no signs of disappearing.

"Yeah," said Banzai as he inched closer to Simba and Nala. "We've started working on our own. No more Scar, you know? We feel a lot better now."

"And a lot more powerful, too," added Shenzi. She deliberately scraped her claws along the ground, trying to frighten Simba and Nala even more. She succeeded.

"You can't do this!" Simba argued, glancing behind momentarily to make sure Nala was safely behind him.

"That's where you're wrong, you little freak," Shenzi told him. "I don't see any way for you to get out of here. I wonder what that means? Oh yeah, we *can* do this."

"Say goodbye to your lives," Banzai said threateningly with a little laugh. He glanced at Ed. "Right, Ed?"

Ed furiously nodded, his tongue lolling out of his mouth.

Lowering herself slowly, Shenzi got ready to pounce at the two cubs. First she was going to kill them, and then after that – if she was in the mood for it – then she'd eat them. She had a feeling the two cubs would make quite a tasty snack...

Simba seemed to stay brave, Shenzi noticed. The stupid cub. Did he not understand the danger he was in? Any other cub would be crying and pleading, but Simba? He was different. And that just managed to anger her even more.

With an angry cry Shenzi pounced at Simba, leaping as high into the air as she could. Simba was dead for sure!

Simba did the first logical thing he could think of: duck. Dropping to the ground instantly, he looked upwards to see Shenzi overshoot Simba by a long way. He then turned around to see Shenzi tumbling furiously down the opposite side of the hill, grunting and groaning every time she violently hit the ground.

She rolled all the way to the bottom, covered in cuts and bruises from the violent fall. She just lay there, motionless.

Peeking down, Simba thought he had killed her. She wasn't moving at all. He had just killed the leader of the hyenas.

Really, there wasn't anyone to blame but Shenzi herself. It was her own fault that she jumped too high and too far, which resulted in her demise. She had killed herself without meaning to.

Banzai rushed over to the edge of the hill, looking down at Shenzi's motionless – and presumably dead – body. He had a shocked, heartbroken look on his face. It looked like it was a hard death for him to take in properly.

Ed just laughed maniacally, the implications of Shenzi's death having no effect on him whatsoever. You could have killed him and he would still be laughing like a psycho.

"W-we'd better go," Simba muttered quietly to Nala. The two of them hurried away from Banzai and Ed down the other side of the hill, quite desperate to get out of there as fast as they could. They had caused enough damage for one day.

Banzai ignored the fact that the cubs were leaving, and suddenly bolted down the other side of the hill at top speed, not caring whether he tripped or not on his way down. When he finally got to the bottom of the rocky hill about half a minute later, he skidded to a halt beside Shenzi's unmoving body.

"Shenzi?" he called, hoping desperately that she still had some life left in her. "You okay?"

She didn't reply. She still looked utterly lifeless. It slowly sunk in for Banzai that she was dead. Well and truly dead.

Banzai could feel tears welling up in his eyes. "Oh... Why?" he moaned. "Why, why, why?" Banzai collapsed at Shenzi's side, crying into her fur. "The only person I ever truly loved and she's dead! Dead, dead, *dead*!"

Banzai then felt someone grab his throat tightly. "I'm not dead, you idiot!"

Banzai looked over to see Shenzi, alive and well. She looked perfectly fine, aside from the cuts and bruises that littered her body.

"You're alive!" Banzai choked out happily.

"Who cares?" Shenzi retorted angrily, the only thing on her mind being Simba and Nala. Her body stung and ached all over, and they were to blame for it. She wanted to tear them apart right now! "Where did those two brats get to?"

Banzai turned his head up towards the hill. "They ran away," he told her, causing her to groan loudly.

"Oh, that's just great!" she exclaimed, boiling with rage. "Why can't they just die?"

"Because we have no luck," came Banzai's simple reply.

Shenzi unsteadily got to her feet, the pain from the fall still biting into her. It wasn't pleasant, but she could ignore the pain just enough to go after those two irritating cubs. They weren't going to evade her this time!

"Come on!" Shenzi growled as she began to run back up the rocky hill, stumbling a few times in the process. "I am *not* letting them get away this time!"

"In here!" Simba cried as he spotted a cave opening in one of the cliff walls. He hurried inside, followed closely by Nala.

He collapsed in the darkness of the cave, tired out from running so much. Nala fell to the ground just beside him, hugging him tightly.

"Thank you," she whispered, smiling at him in the darkness. "I don't know what I'd do without you, Simba."

"Same here," replied Simba, smiling back at her. He couldn't help but want to cuddle her back and tell her the same thing.

But he couldn't. He just couldn't.

"Do you think we'll be safe in here?" Nala asked her best friend as she continued to hold on to him, fear truly evident in her voice.

She didn't like this. It was a really frightening experience. What made it worse was the fact that Simba had just supposedly murdered one of the hyenas, and Nala had no doubt in her mind that the remaining two would most likely be consumed with hatred and revenge for the two cubs, and would now stop at nothing to kill them.

"We'll be fine," he assured her in a calm tone. He only managed to calm her for a few seconds. "I think."

"Got ya!" a female voice cried as Nala was wrenched from the cave opening. She screamed in terror.

Simba hopped to his paws and bolted out of the den to see Shenzi, Banzai and Ed. Clearly Simba hadn't murdered Shenzi like he had thought. Part of him wished he had, because now she looked *really* mad.

Shenzi had Nala in her grasp, and was getting ready to slash all the life out of Nala.

"I think I'll start with her eyes," Shenzi told her hyena cohorts as she stared at Nala menacingly. "I'll rip them out slowly."

"Leave her alone," Simba ordered them. Enough was enough.

"What are you gonna do about it?" Shenzi retorted, prodding Simba in the chest with her free paw and causing him to stagger backwards.

Simba frowned, and leapt into the air, pushing Nala free from Shenzi's grasp. Simba slid across the ground with Nala on his stomach, coming to a halt a few feet away from the three hyenas.

"That's it!" Shenzi exclaimed angrily, ready to rip both their heads off. She got ready to leap at them when a lion jumped in front of them suddenly, causing her to fall onto her back in surprise.

"Scar?" the three hyenas yelled in surprise.

Scar was looking down at Shenzi, an unimpressed look on his face. "I must say I'm not amused," he told her.

She laughed nervously, her fear of their former leader returning to her. "What brings you around here?"

"I had an inkling that you might try to take over the Pride Lands yourself," he told them. "And I seriously don't want that to happen. If you took over the kingdom when I couldn't, then... Well, that would just be embarrassing."

"So what are you saying?" Banzai asked, cocking his head to one side.

Scar grabbed Banzai by the throat, pulling the hyena's face right up to his. "I'm saying that you'd better get back to that

jungle this instant before I force you to eat yourselves! How *dare* you try to betray me!"

"But, Scar—" Shenzi began, before Scar dropped Banzai and grabbed her, throwing her so she landed a few feet away from him.

"You dirty traitors!" Scar roared. "Start running! Go on!"

Shenzi whimpered, before she started running away, back to the jungle. Clearly Scar was taking charge of things again.

Scar glared at Banzai and Ed. "What are *you* waiting for?"

"Uh... Nothing," Banzai replied, smiling innocently before running away, closely followed by a laughing Ed.

Scar growled and slowly walked after them. How could they betray him like that? They were in for some severe punishments when they got back home...

Simba and Nala lay on the ground, stunned as they watched Scar and the three hyenas disappear into the distance.

"Uh... did Uncle Scar just save us?" Simba asked, scratching his head in confusion.

"I think so," Nala replied, just as confused as he was. She was still shaking, her fear still remaining after that rather terrifying ordeal.

Simba got to his paws, and smiled kindly at his best friend. He turned around and offered his back to her. "Piggyback?"

Nala stared at him for a few seconds, and a smile soon spread across her face. "Sure!"

She climbed on to his back, and together they made their way out of the Outlands, hoping that the rest of the evening was going to be relatively quiet.

The End

AN: Long chapter, huh? But that's what you like, isn't it? Great! Well, the next story shall be up tomorrow, as always. See you then!

NEXT TIME: Hago hypnotises King Mufasa, and influences several decisions in the pride to make himself King. Can Simba and Nala see through this and save the day?